



LOS ANGELES, CA.- [Tierra Del Sol Gallery](#) is presenting the solo online exhibition of Michael LeVell, one of the founding artists of the progressive studios of the Tierra del Sol Foundation—a dynamic organization that empowers people with developmental disabilities since 1971.

LeVell's two-and-three-dimensional works are inspired by his deep appreciation of architectural imagery. While legally blind, LeVell is a connoisseur of magazine *Architectural Digest*. He studies the periodical's images closely, then reduces the architectural gaze to its most salient lines and forms. The resulting acrylic paintings are saturated color fields of abstracted interiors that seem at once timeless and refreshingly contemporary.

LeVell renders his exterior landscapes in colored pencil with bold geometry and mostly primary colors. He covers the paper multiple times and then redacts it to produce richly textured surfaces. LeVell then finishes the works with hand-drawn frames in various colors, including pastels that help to create dimensionality and a sophisticated sculptural effect.

There is an evocative tactile quality to LeVell's two-dimensional pieces that he teases out in his slab ceramic works. LeVell makes two distinct types of rough-hewn, hand-shaped objects: furniture and abstract geometric forms. Both have direct relationships to his interior and exterior paintings and drawings, and placed within the gallery installation, they act as bridges between the 2D styles.

Studying the objects in this perspective allows the viewer to see the surprising connections between the brutalist geometric forms and the interiors, as well as the formalism joining the furniture and the exterior drawings.

Like fellow black Angeleno and legally blind contemporary artist Dominique Moody, LeVell moves easily between works on paper and sculpture. An intuitive spatial awareness builds a cohesion of loose form, line and density of color. And like Claude Monet who also was visually impaired, these artists make what they see and feel in a way that offers the viewer a glimpse into an abstracted articulation of the world around us.

Michael LeVell works as a studio artist with the progressive art studios of Tierra del Sol Foundation. He has an innate ability to draw furniture and architecture in perfect perspective; he uses this ability to produce intricate sculptures in clay as well. His devotion to the magazine Architectural Digest inspires LeVell's creative process. He often recreates photo spreads with his own original repeated visual motifs and color palette. A recent development in his work has been the inclusion of figurative drawings, which he also instills with a sense of structure and pattern. LeVell is one of the original eight artists who helped found First Street Gallery studio program in 1989 and was honored with a retrospective exhibition in 2014 to celebrate First Street Gallery's 25th Anniversary. His work has been shown and sold around the world in such locations as Los Angeles, New York City, Boston, San Francisco and Japan. White Columns, NY, presented a 2018 solo show of LeVell's elegant paintings and ceramic sculptures in CONDO Art Fair NY, gaining critical acclaim and the praise of Jerry Saltz, Pulitzer Prize winning art critic with New York Magazine. LeVell's work has also been presented at the Outsider Art Fair in New York and Felix Art Fair in Los Angeles.